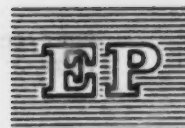




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REPORT ON PROGRAMME MATTERS REQUIRING POLICY GUIDANCE FROM THE COUNCIL

Report of the Executive Director

Addendum

MODIFICATION TO THE UNEP MEDIUM-TERM PLAN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Summary

This document, the second addendum to document UNEP/GC.16/21, brings to the attention of the Governing Council the modifications to the UNEP Medium-term Plan 1992-1997 made by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the General Assembly.

MODIFICATIONS TO UNEP MEDIUM-TERM PLAN BY
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. At its first special session in 1988, the Governing Council adopted the System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme 1990-1995 (SWMTEP), presented to it by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) (document UNEP/GCSS.I/7/Add.1), and the Medium-term Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme for the period 1990-1995 (document UNEP/GCSS.I/7/Add.2).
2. Following General Assembly resolution 43/219 of 21 December 1988, which stated that the next medium-term plan of the United Nations should cover the period 1992-1997, the Secretary-General presented to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its thirtieth session from 7 May - 11 June 1990, his proposal for the United Nations medium-term Plan for that period. This proposal included Programme 16: Environment (document A/45/6 (Prog.16)), drawn up the basis of document UNEP/GCSS.I/7/Add.2, with modifications to take into account the postponement of two years.
3. It should be noted that in the structure of the United Nations Medium-term Plan 1992-1997, Environment has become a Programme within Major Programme IV: International Economic Co-operation for Development, while in the structure of the United Nations Medium-term Plan 1984-1989 (extended to 1991) Environment was a major programme.
4. Copies of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the first part of its thirtieth session (A/45/16 - Part I) are available upon request. What follows is a summary of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee, as contained in paragraphs 185-192 of that document:
 - (i) Recent mandates of the General Assembly, particularly its resolution 44/228, should have been reflected in the programme;
 - (ii) The programme on Environment was provisional in nature. It would have to be revised in the light of the decisions to be taken by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992;
 - (iii) There was no legislative basis from which to assign priority in subprogramme 2 to international water systems in the context of setting up multidisciplinary programmes for the environmentally sound management of water resources;
 - (iv) Subprogramme 13 on technical and regional co-operation was to be renamed "Global and regional co-operation";
 - (v) In subprogramme 6, the role of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and the objectives of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction had to be explicitly specified;
 - (vi) The last part of paragraph 16.22 (a) (iv) had to be deleted. This part reads: "... and to ensure the total elimination of fully halogenated chlorofluorocarbons, halons and other substances likely to deplete the ozone layer by the year 2000 or soon thereafter";
 - (vii) Subprogramme 3 on Terrestrial ecosystems, was also to cover the protection of all forest ecosystems.

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5. At its forty-fifth session the General Assembly reviewed the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, including the proposed Medium-term Plan for the period 1992-1997. By its resolution 45/253 the Assembly adopted the proposed Medium-term Plan together with the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and added several conclusions and recommendations. The main additional recommendation by the General Assembly related to the programme on Environment was the deletion of subprogramme 9: Peace, Security and the Environment and its incorporation of its content into subprogrammes 10: Environmental Assessment and 12: Environmental awareness.

6. The views of the Executive Director on the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the General Assembly related to the programme on Environment are presented below. He seeks the views of the Governing Council on these points.

A. Structure

7. In decision SS.I/7 the Governing Council

"Recommends to the General Assembly that the global programme on the environment of the United Nations medium-term plan beginning in 1992 be structured along the lines of the system-wide medium-term environment programme to ensure uniformity of content and to facilitate co-ordination of the environmental activities being undertaken by the United Nations system in the light of General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187 of 11 December 1987."

8. According to the United Nations Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, the Medium-term Plan, as adopted, constitutes the principal policy directive of the United Nations and serves as a framework for the formulation of the biennial programme budget.

9. In order to follow the above regulations and rules, the Executive Director has downgraded the status of the Programme Budget Document from that of a "major programme" to a "programme". This implies some loss of clarity in the presentation of activities to be financed from the Environment Fund as well as the introduction of a significant level of generality. Nevertheless, in order to keep the budget consistent with SWMTEP, he has prepared the draft Programme Budget Document 1992-1993 following the substantive items listed in that programme.

B. Provisional nature of the programme

10. The UNEP Medium-term Plan is derived from the SWMTEP. The provisional nature of that programme had been recognized by the Governing Council in its decision 15/21, in which the Council decided that the mid-term review of the System-Wide Medium-Term Environment Programme for the period 1990-1995 should be carried out in accordance with paragraph 411 of the approved text of that programme, which states that the evaluation of SWMTEP should be scheduled for the end of 1992 so that its results can be submitted to the Governing Council at its seventeenth session in 1993.

11. As the mid-term evaluation of SWMTEP will be made at the end of 1992, it will take into account the results of the 1992 United Nations Conference on

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Environment and Development. The evaluation will constitute a basis for preparing the revision to the programme on environment of the United Nations Medium-Term Plan 1992-1997, which will be submitted to the Governing Council at its seventeenth session and to the General Assembly through ECOSOC.

C. Water

12. The UNEP programme for the environmentally sound management of inland waters, which includes rivers, lakes and groundwater aquifers, was initiated in 1985 in response to paragraph 2 of Governing Council decision 11/7 on programme matters, in which the council requested the Executive Director to ensure that the highest priority be accorded to the water programme.

13. The programme not only promotes the integrated management of all freshwater resources, but stipulates the highest priority for the preparation and implementation of action plans for international watersheds in each of the developing regions of the world. These action plans have been developed in five phases: (i) negotiation of a political consensus by the Governments concerned for a collaborative project; (ii) assessment of the technical aspects to be considered; (iii) formulation of a draft action plan; (iv) adoption of the action plan by the Governments concerned; and (v) promotion of its implementation. Legal instruments and institutional arrangements are developed as necessary for the implementation of these action plans.

14. In 1985 UNEP initiated work on the formulation of the Action Plan for the Zambezi River Basin, which was subsequently adopted by the Governments concerned in May 1987. The Governing Council, in decision 14/22, while noting the signature and entry into force of the Agreement on the Action Plan for the Environmentally Sound Management of the Common Zambezi River System, requested the Executive Director to assist the Governments of the Zambezi Basin countries and regional institutions concerned to ensure that the implementation of the Plan started before the end of 1987.

15. The Master Plan for the Lake Chad basin was approved in November 1990 by the Ministers of Environment of the countries of the basin. Preparatory work for other international action plans is under way in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

16. In decision 15/1 the Governing Council called the attention of the international community to the need to concentrate efforts on a selected number of areas, including the protection of the quality of freshwater resources, and requested UNEP to give priority, among others areas, to the management of shared freshwater resources.

17. General Assembly resolution 44/228 on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development included "protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources" among the areas of major concern in maintaining the quality of Earth's environment.

18. In the view of the Executive Director, the relevant General Assembly resolutions and Governing Council decisions provide sufficient legislative authority to assign the highest priority to the development of multidisciplinary programmes for the environmentally sound management of water resources.

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D. Technical and regional co-operation

19. The Governing Council approved at its fifteenth session the following strategy for subprogramme 13.1 on Technical and regional co-operation (Decision 15/20, para. 3):

Objective: To provide technical assistance to developing countries, promote skills formation and further regional and sub-regional co-operation to deal with major environmental concerns, and to advance environmentally sound sustainable development.

Strategy:

(i) To play a catalytic and co-ordinating role in promoting regional and sub-regional co-operation in responding to the major environmental needs of developing countries;

(ii) To co-operate in specific activities with Regional Commissions instead of institutional support;

(iii) To encourage design and implementation of projects of a multidisciplinary character exemplifying integrated environmental management and planning, whose results may be replicated elsewhere.

20. In accordance with the strategy, UNEP action on technical assistance to developing countries is implemented largely at the regional level, through the UNEP Regional and Liaison Offices and in co-operation with the United Nations Regional Commissions. Examples of the implementation of this programme are provided by the Programme of Action of the African Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean adopted at the Seventh Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean.

21. Taking the above into account, the Executive Director believes that the title of the subprogramme adequately reflects UNEP's mandate as approved by the Governing Council. UNEP's global co-operation effort falls under the various items of the whole programme, not under this specific subprogramme.

E. Community preparedness for natural and man-made disasters

22. In accordance with Governing Council decision 11/7, the Executive Director assigns low priority to activities under this rubric. Nevertheless, in view of the importance of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), the Executive Director has included UNEP's participation in the Decade, with UNDRO as a co-operating agency, in his proposals to the Governing Council for the next biennium (see UNEP/GC.16/15).

F. Atmosphere

23. As indicated in paragraph 3(vi) above, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination recommended the deletion of the following sentence from the Medium-term Plan (paragraph 16.22(a)(iv):

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"...and to ensure the total elimination of fully halogenated chlorofluorocarbons, halons and other substances likely to deplete the ozone layer by the year 2000 or soon thereafter."

24. At its second special session in 1990 (decision SS.II/2), the Governing Council welcomed the results of the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and requested the Executive Director to continue to give full support to the activities approved by the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol. The sentence recommended for deletion results from the application of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the amendments introduced at the Second Meeting of the Parties held in London in June 1990. The initial provisions of the Protocol in respect of ozone-depleting substances are summarized below:

(i) CFCs

By June 1990: to freeze CFC production and consumption at the 1986 level;

By June 1994: to achieve a 20% reduction of the 1986 levels of production and consumption;

By June 1998: to achieve a 50% reduction of the 1986 levels of production and consumption.

(ii) Halons

By January 1993: to freeze halons at the 1986 levels of production and consumption.

25. However, at the London Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, held in June 1990, the reduction goals for CFCs and halons specified by the Montreal Protocol were substantially changed and an additional set of CFCs, as well as carbon tetrachloride and methyl-chloroform were brought under control measures as follows:

(a) Through the mechanism of adjustment:

(i) CFCs (those subject to the initial control measures contained in the Montreal Protocol):

By 1995: a 50% reduction of the 1986 levels of production and consumption;

By 1997: an 85% reduction of the 1986 levels of production and consumption;

By 2000: total phase-out of production and consumption.

(ii) Halons (those that were subject to the initial control measures contained in the Montreal Protocol):

By 1992: freeze at the 1986 level of production and consumption;

By 1995: a 50% reduction of the 1986 levels of production and consumption;

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By 2000: total phase-out of production and consumption.

(b) Through the mechanism of amendment:

(iii) A new set of 10 CFCs that were not mentioned in the Montreal Protocol

By 1993: a 20% reduction of the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 1997: an 85% reduction of the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 2000: total phase-out.

(iv) Carbon tetrachloride:

By 1995: an 85% reduction of the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 2000: total phase-out.

(v) Methyl-chloroform:

By 1993: freeze at the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 1995: a 30% reduction of the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 2000: a 20% reduction of the 1989 levels of production and consumption;

By 2005: total phase-out.

25. Thus all ozone-depleting substances covered by the Montreal Protocol and its adjustments and amendments are expected to be phased out by the year 2000 except methyl-chloroform, which is expected to be phased out shortly thereafter (2005). It is the view of the Executive Director that the statement contained in paragraph 16.22 (a)(iv) is correct when the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol are considered together with the adjustments and amendments outlined above.

G. Terrestrial ecosystems

26. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination recommended that this subprogramme should also cover the protection of all forest ecosystems. The Executive Director welcomes this recommendation. The draft Programme Budget Document 1992-1993 includes under the title "Forests and other ecosystems" activities in tropical, temperate and critical areas, such as highlands in particular.

H. Peace, Security and the Environment

27. In its decision 45/253, the General Assembly recommended that subprogramme 9 on Peace, Security and Environment be deleted and its contents incorporated into subprogramme 10 on Environmental Assessment and

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subprogramme 12 on Environmental Awareness. The Executive Director would appreciate guidance from the Council on this issue in view of the following factors.

28. At its session of a special character in 1982, the Council had, in its decision I, section III, paragraph 2 (j), considered that the area of peace, security and the environment was one of the priorities for action that should receive attention by the United Nations system, and specifically through the system-wide programme activities co-ordinated by UNEP.

29. The Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/186, indicates in paragraph 86 that "one of the roles of UNEP is to promote environmentally sound development in harmony with peace and security, and towards this end, issues of disarmament and security, in so far as they relate to the environment, should continue to receive appropriate attention".

30. SWMTEP 1990-1995, adopted by the Governing Council in 1988, included as justifications for this subprogramme (i) the elimination of the irrational use and depletion of resources due to the build-up of supplies of weapons and armaments and (ii) prevention of the damage that may be caused to the environment by military activities and their remnants.

The recent hostilities in the Gulf strongly support the justifications mentioned above.

Suggested action by the Governing Council

The Governing Council may wish to:

Take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its thirtieth session.

Take note of General Assembly resolution 45/253, particularly on the recommendation to delete subprogramme 9 on Peace, Security and the Environment from Programme 16 of the United Nations Medium-term Plan for the period 1992-1997;

Recall General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, which states the main functions and responsibilities of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme;

Recall Governing Council decision 14/13 of 19 June 1987 and General Assembly resolution 42/186 of 11 December 1987 adopting the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond and call attention to section III D on Security and Environment of the Environmental Perspective, which defines in paragraph 86 the role of UNEP on the issues of disarmament and security;

Recommend to the General Assembly the following:

1. To maintain the high priority assigned by the Council to the preparation of multidisciplinary programmes for the environmentally sound management of water resources;

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2. To keep the title of subprogramme 13 as "Technical and regional co-operation";
3. To maintain the text of paragraph 16.22 (a) (iv);
4. To maintain subprogramme 9 on Peace, Security and the Environment as a part of the Environment Programme.
